

Reflection Paper

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I can really say that I have grown professionally while being involved in this STAT21 grant. While being involved with this 21st Century Learning Skills grant, I have attempted things in my classroom that I would have never considered before. As our world is constantly changing, it is important as educators that we continue to change with the times to keep students actively engaged. I have always believed that learning is a life-long journey for me. The teacher tube video "Engage Me" really made a big impact on me.

My project with measurement was a great success! The students seemed to be engaged in their learning, acquiring new knowledge, but most of all having a fabulous time! We did a great deal of hands-on learning as well as using the Smartboard and Senteos to enhance the learning of this standard. Many parents at conferences talked about their children really liking being able to use the Smartboard and Senteos. They were actively involved with their learning and it seemed to make a remarkable difference! It is always fun for teachers to try new things too, so I was probably very excited to teach those concepts in a new way with some 21st century skills! ☺

I did run into a few minor "glitches" during my unit on measurement. Technology isn't always foolproof. This was also a great learning tool for me. We downloaded the old version of Senteo for a trial period. When that trial period was up, the new version was downloaded. This created some issues with the old and new version. We also discovered that the old version was more user-friendly in showing graphs of what students answered the questions correctly. I also found that for younger students such as second graders, I would link the Senteo questions together. If the questions weren't linked together, then each student would see their score on the Senteo screen after each question. This caused some stress and tears in my classroom for children that have high expectations for themselves. When I administered the posttest, I linked the questions together and children could not see their score until the test was completed. This eliminated the stress for several of my students.

I acquired new knowledge at all of the ESA sessions I attended. I even attended the Smartboard training twice! I am very actively campaigning my principal for a Smartboard! The possibilities are endless and I can think of so many ways to actively engage my students. Learning should be enjoyable! When I was able to borrow the Smartboard, my principal asked me to demonstrate it for my colleagues at a staff meeting. It was a huge hit! I also demonstrated the Senteos at a staff meeting. The staff had fun taking a quiz that was prepared for them. It increased awareness among staff and it was received very positively.

I developed a portaportal to share with my students and it has been a great success! I have added so many sites and it has been wonderful to share sites with students and parents. Parents have given many positive comments about the portaportal. I also developed a wikispace where I have posted weekly spelling lists and vocabulary lists. This has been advantageous since parents can access these lists online in case a child loses a list. I have also received positive feedback on the wikispace.

The Smartboard and Senteos were great engaging tools! I am hopeful that our district will be convinced to purchase these effective tools for our district and students! The wikispace and portaportal are things I plan to continue to update and use. I am confident that both my students and I will continue to enjoy the journey of learning as the world continues to change!